THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) to (e) According to available information, militants belonging to the terrorist outfits Harkat-ul-Ansar and Hizo-ul-Mujahideen have holed themselves up in the township of Charar-e-Sharief where the shrine of the Sufi Saint Hazrat Noor-ud Din-Noorani is situated. The State Government has strengthened the Security arrangements in the vicinity of the township to check any further infiltration and escalation of the situation. There has been intermittent firing between the security forces and the militants but despite provocation the security forces have maintained the utmost restraint to ensure against any harm to civilian life and property, including any damage to the shrine. A large number of people, including women and children, have left the town due to fear and apprehension caused by the presence of militants in the town. However, of late, some families have returned to their homes in the town.

(f) and (g) Government are aware of such reports and of the attempts of Pakistan and its protege groups in the State to use their own acts of violating the sanctity of religious places and trampelling upon the sentiments of the local people, or inability to prevent this, for spreading dis-information and provoking the people.

There is no seige of the shrine and the residents of the town are able to move in and out without impediments. Government had also offered safe passage to the foreign nationals present in the town upto the LOC if they surrendered, which has not drawn any response. A close watch is being kept on the situation and such further action will be taken as may be required keeping in view the situation, the topography of the area and the sanctity of the shrine.

Damage caused to properties of Kashmiri-Pandit migrants

3943. SHRI JAGMOHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of houses of Kashmiri Pandit-migrants in the Valley burnt, damaged or looted;

(b) the number of cases in which compensation has been paid or insurance claims settled; and

(c) the details of the amount so far paid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Outcome of Jammu Republic Day Bomb-blast investigations

3944. SHRI JAGMOHAN:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether with the arrest of a Pakistani terrorist agent, the police authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have resolved the case relating explosions at the Republic Day function in the State in which a number of persons were killed and the State Governor amongst others were injured on January 26, 1995;

(b) if so, what are the details of the plot unearthed and the persons, Indians and foreigners apprehended in connection therewith; and

(c) what follow-up steps have so far been taken in connection therewith?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) Yes, Sir.